



1084th meeting of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society

8:00PM Wednesday August 23, 2006
Room 370, Building C, Fort Mason
San Francisco, California

A numismatic walking tour of San Francisco

Michael Wehner

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Please join us Wednesday, August 23 to be lead around San Francisco's many numismatic sites of interest. Walking attire not necessary as the tour will be virtual.

1083rd meeting, July 26, 2006: Christian Gobrecht and his dollar.
Whalen (reviewed by Herb Miles)

Our good friend and Santa Cruz resident, *Whalen*, gave a spirited talk on Gobrecht Seated Liberty dollar coinage minted during the mid to the end part of the 19th century. Christian Gobrecht was a well known artist, inventor and die engraver who lived from 1795 to 1844. The U.S. Mint actively recruited him for Mint Chief Engraver in order to invigorate U.S. coinage design. Gobrecht had designed several coins prior to the Seated Liberty series; the Capped Bust half dollar and the Coronet Head half cent and cent and the Coronet Head half and quarter eagle so his work was well respected by the Mint.

The Liberty Seated design bears a strong resemblance to the seated Britannia of English coinage so Gobrecht probably received some inspiration from those circulating pieces. The U.S. design has the seated figure of Liberty balancing a shield inscribed with the word "Liberty" while holding a staff topped by a Phrygian or liberty cap. This cap has come down through history from the inhabitants of Phrygia, the citizens of central Anatolia, to Greece where Trojans were portrayed with the cap to show they were not Greek and to Rome where emancipated slaves wore the cap to show they were free men.

The French used this symbol during their revolution and Marianne, the personification of France, wears such a cap to this day.

One mystery of Christian Gobrecht still lingers, however, since no one seems to know how he died at the early age of 49 years old. Several theories have been advanced, but the literature to prove he died from one incident or another is sparse and cannot be found to prove conclusively how he met his fate.

Of course, Whalen passed around his complete (!) collection of Gobrecht dollars which was delightful. Members tried not to drool.

Exhibits (May 2006). (reported by *Herb Miles*)

John Dale brought some Smokey the Bear tokens he had acquired many years ago and asked if any of the membership would like one. Thanks John!

Mark Wm. Clark exhibited a brass Dominican Republic peso from 1952, a curiosity since they were actually minted in silver. This piece seems to be die struck and had great detail, it is just brass!

Jerry Schimmel gave us the last part of his story on why one of his Chinese tokens was inscribed "Cash 8" (in Chinese symbols). Apparently and according to a correspondent from China, this was a piece used in gambling and was equivalent to the U.S. 25 cents piece or two bit, so Cash 8 is a slang term for 2 bits, Chinese style!

Michael Wehner brought a 1859-S Seated Dollar, the first silver dollar minted at the Commercial Street Mint, and so a prize for him, and an 1868 San Francisco shell card token advertising "Tonic of California" also featuring the Gobrecht Seated Liberty.

Gordon Donnell exhibited a Capitol Plastic holder containing coins designed by former mint chief engraver, Frank Gasparro, the Kennedy Half Dollar, the Lincoln Cent Memorial reverse and others mentioning that he bought this from Bowers & Ruddy "back in the day."

Phil Nordin exhibited a dyslexic 500 Piso Philippines note with an ink transfer error. Phil stated that this is available so do not pay too much for such an error, but it also very interesting as he mentioned the history of this colorful piece which portrays Corazon Aquino and was printed to honor her slain husband, assassinated upon his return to the Philippines.

Rich Webster brought a bronze aes of Delmatius/Dalmatius/Dalmetious? 335-330 AD, a minor ruler under Constantine. This coin was minted in Thessalonika but unfortunately for Delmatius, being a junior ruler under Constantine meant he was disdained as other coins misspell his name and offer other derogatory pictorials of him; and eventually he was assassinated and his kingdom lost.

New members

Please welcome the following new members to the Society:

Ed Treuting, Emeryville

Kenneth Kolby, San Francisco

Richard Frank, San Francisco

Raffle (July 2006) (Elliot Wehner, raffle chairman)

Uncirculated 1942 Philadelphia 25 Cent piece won by *Ed Trauting*
A Brazil silver 200 Reis was also won by *Ed Trauting*
A large China silver coin, also known as a “Junk Dollar” because of
the boat on the reverse was taken away by *Daniel Feldman*
A Costa Rican cap was taken away by *Mark Wm. Clark*
A weight (probably brass) marked 5 oz but weighing considerably
less than 5 ounces, was also won by Mark.
A 1933 Fostoria, Ohio Depression era scrip note went home with
Gordon Donnell.

Tentative 2006 future programs

September: *Elliot Wehner* “National Bank Notes”

October: Stephen Huston TBA

November: How about you?

December: Holiday potluck party

Please contact Michael Wehner if you would like to speak in
2006 at (415) 928-4469 or mf_wehner@yahoo.com